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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to measure the conformity levels and the identification process among university women students in an Islamic culture. Identity/conformity tests and costume identity tests were administered to 129 undergraduate female students at King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia. The Photographic Costume Identity Test and the Identity Conformity Tests were both administered in Arabic. The findings from the two tests indicated that the majority of students belonged to the moderate level of conformity to Islamic values as reflected in their clothing, social customs and selected social habits. It is suggested that these students have not fully internalized the Islamic cultural identity. Low level conformers, loners, reported feeling comfortable about their identity, a finding that reflects either a contradiction between their acknowledged religious affiliation and expressed identity preference, or a shallow knowledge of cultural and religious values. The findings showed a positive relationship between student's conformity level and mothers' and friends' level of conformity. The religious factor did not have such a positive effect and exposure to foreign influences did not appear to contribute to low levels of conformity. (BHK)

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LEVELS OF CONFORMITY TO ISLAMIC VALUES AND THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION

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Levels of Conformity to Islamic Values
and the Process of Identification

Abstract

The study was conducted to measure the conformity levels and the identification process among university women students in an Islamic culture and to investigate some related factors. Identity - conformity test and costume identity tests were prepared by the researcher and administered to 129 undergraduate women students at King Abdulaziz University with the objective of studying the following propositions: (a) majority of students have a moderate level of conformity to Islamic cultural identity (b) high level conformers are fewer in number than low level conformers (c) those with low levels of conformity are not comfortable about their identity (d) confined dormitory living enhances level of conformity, (e) levels of conformity are closely associated with a number of social factors.

Levels of Conformity to Islamic Values and the Process of Indentification

Introduction

Islamic culture has a well defined set of values, the most central of which represent for the Muslims the unquestionable Divine commandments as revealed by God through the Quran. One of these values concerns individual's appearance and applies especially to women. Specifically, Islam emphasises that Muslims should maintain modesty in everything relating to their appearance.

In keeping with these values, Islamic culture has set forth certain guide lines that ensure woman's modesty in dress and in behavior. Basic though these values as stated in the shariah* are, the actual practice has been subject to change and variation from time to time. Sometimes, the variation from the ideal norm may be small and insignificant at other times it may be large and approaching deviance. The causes of these deviations are complex and multifarious. Yet the change may be so subtle and gradual that even the devout believers may be unaware of their slow departure from the basic normative ideals.

The instructions in Islam with regard to modesty in public appearance are so categorically stated that a change or deviation may imply a rejection or denial of some essential aspect of the value system. This in turn may create a problem of conflict for the faithful believer and generate vague identities that do not meet the healthy moral standard of identification. The study of Driedger (1976) indicates the importance of obvious, not vague, identity and his result supports Lewin's (1948) thesis, that individuals need a clear sense of identification with some ethnic or majority culture and this according to Lewin is the basis for a sense of well-being. Weiland and Coughlin (1979) draw attention to the importance of a clear identity or "accurate self identification" in their study of white-American and Mexican-American school children and found among their subjects a strong preference for classmates of their own race. These studies indicate that full acceptance of cultural values is both necessary and beneficial and helps generate a feeling of well-being and a healthy identity.

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* (Islamic jurisprudence).

Review of Literature

American research literature concerning identity rejection or acceptance was thoroughly investigated among blacks where, in the 1950s and early 1960s, studies showed that black children rejected black identities (Ward and Braun, 1972). Schofield (1978) measured the racial identity of 167 white and 157 black children and found that black children were less accepting of their racial group membership than were whites. In an adolescent sample of both blacks and whites, (30 subjects of each race), Kuhlman (1979) found similar result while Ward and Braun (1972) found that black children, seven and eight years old (60 subjects), were accepting and proud of their racial identity. Also, Fox and Jordan (1973) found, among a sample of 360 black children ages five through seven, a majority expressed their own race preference. A research conducted by Bunton and Weissbach (1974) indicated that a change from black identy rejection to an acceptance was due to enlightening educational programs. They established in their study that black kindergartners and first graders exposed to pro-black community school programs would prefer and identify more with dolls of their own race than kindergartners who were not exposed to the program. Yee and Lee (1977) described a high school primary prevention program which provided Filipino youth with a positive view of their cultural identity as a basic psychological and social support system for a positive mental health condition in order to develop within the youth, more positive traits. A similar program was designed at Ohio State University in order to foster racial awareness (Soul, 1983). The process of identification achieved important functions such as self-re-assurance, (Caliez, 1978), and anxiety reduction, (Greene, Morrison, and Tischler, 1980). With a positive and clear identity, these functions would operate adequately. From this we can derive the assumption that students with high levels of conformities to Islamic cultural values and those who achieve an attitude of obediance to God's commands attain a sense of well-being as a result of self-assurance and freedom from anxiety.

Objectives of the study

The meaning of identity or identification process in this study is what Greene,Morrison, and Tischler (1980, p.91) referred to as "those largely covert dynamics whereby one individual acquires in varying degrees of permanence and extent, personality characteristics of another". Personality-character concept here implied a broad meaning. It included the heritage of all values and customs of the individual and the group.

The purposes of this study are: (a) to measure the levels of conformity to some aspects of Islamic cultural values among the university women students in an Islamic society; (b) to investigate the determinants of these levels and other related factors; (c) to draw attention to the necessity of identifying the characteristics of healthy and vague identity. With these objectives in mind the following hypotheses were drawn and tested:

1. There are significantly more university women students with moderate level of conformity to Islamic cultrual identity than those with high or low conformity level.
2. The high level conformers are significantly fewer than the low level conformers.
3. The majority of university women students with a high level of conformity to Islamic cultural identity are those who live in university dormitories where they are exposed to vigorous religious programs, and who live in a restricted social environment.
4. The majority of university women students with a low level of conformity do not feel comfortable about their identity.
5. There are significant differences between high and moderate, high and low, and moderate and low conformity levels regarding the following factors:
   a) family factors.
   b) conformity levels of peer groups.
   c) exposure to foreign influences.
   d) religiosity.

Materials and Methods

Instrumentation

The researcher used the following instruments, written in Arabic:-

1. A questionnaire prepared by the researcher that aimed at obtaining:-

a) demographic information on age, birth place, nationality, etc.

b) information about factors related to the hypotheses, such as family income, parents' education, travel abroad, mother and peer group conformity, interest in watching television, visiting fashion boutiques, buying fashion magazines, etc.

c) Identity-conformity Test, developed by the researcher which contained twelve questions about the student's preference in dressing, fashions, customs, and some selected social habits.

A choice of three answers followed each question. One answer indicated a definite conformity with Islamic value identity, the second answer represented a moderate conformity, while the third answer referred to non-conforming identity. The three answers were followed by a space of one line for the student to make comments, if she desired, regarding each question. Examples from the test questions are:-

i) Does your general appearance conform with the values of Islamic society?

(a) Yes it does.

(b) Sometimes it conforms.

(c) No, it does not.

(d) Comments.

ii) What is your opinion of Islamic dress for women?.

(a) It should be worn all the time.

(b) It should be worn occasionally.

(c) It should be kept in a museum.

(d) Comments.

iii) Do you wear mini-skirts or shorts?.

(a) Yes, I do.

(b) Sometimes at home.

(c) No, I do not.

(d) Comments.

2. Photographic Costume Identity Test.

Researchers in ethnic-racial identification used photographs of white, black, Mexican-American, and other races, male and female children to investigate ethnic identification and preferences See (Rohrer (1972), Rice, et. al., (1974), and Weiland (1979).

In the present study, the researcher prepared photographs for the costumes test which included twelve items. Each item, one through ten, contained a group of different pictures representing one subject as follows:-

Item (1) was a group of four pictures of girls aged 8-10 wearing play clothes where each picture represented a different degree of conformity in appearance to Islamic identity starting from a conservative style to a clear nonconservative style. Items (2),(3) and (4) were also groups of girls' pictures where each group represented girl's clothing for different occasions (parties, traveling, and home). Pictures of each occasion varied with the same degrees of conformity. Items (5),(6),(7),(8) and (9) represented groups of young women's clothing for different occasions (beach wear, travel, picnic, afternoon, and party clothing). Pictures for each occasion had the similar degrees of conformity. Item (10) was represented by four pictures of young men's clothing with the same degrees of conformity as for women and children's clothing. Item (11) was a picture of a young man wearing soccer gear with shorts several inches above the knees*. Item (12) asked the subject to draw a young woman walking in a shopping area. The idea of this item was taken from Goodenough's Draw-A-Person Test which has been used by many researchers as a measure of racial identity acceptance, (Machover, 1949), (Schofield, 1978), (Kuhlman, 1979). In the present study, the drawing was used as a measure of cultural identity acceptance and level of conformity.

A pilot study was conducted to test the questionnaire, including the Identity Conformity Test, using a simple random sample of forty students. A split - half reliability test was applied to the Identity Conformity Test by using Pearson's correlation coefficient formula and it yielded a correlation of 0.41, which was high for a population of forty.

Another pilot study was conducted to test the Photographic Costume Identity Test, using a random sample of thirty students. A split-half raliability test was also applied by using the same formula and it yielded a correlation of 0.67, which was very high for a population of thirty subjects.

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* According to the shariah men may not expose themselves from the navel to the knees.

Subjects

A total of 129 undergraduate women students were selected by stratified random sampling from lists containing the names of all women students from all years, one through six, who were enrolled in the Medical School at King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The lists included about 300 names that were listed alphabetically and by number. The odd numbers were taken, so the total size of the sample was about 150. Due to various reasons, such as an unwillingness to be a subject of research, difficulty in contacting some students, or failure to complete the questionaire, 31 students were not included. This left a total of 129 students who participated as subjects for the study. Sixty-eight students lived in the university dormitories, while 61 lived at home.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered in groups of 15 or less by the researcher with the aid of a university administrator. The subjects were informed by the researcher that they had been selected randomly and were offered the opportunity to participate voluntarily in a scientific research study which depended upon their truthfulness. Realistic rather than idealistic responses were of the utmost importance. The researcher also explained the method of response being used in the questionnaire. The subjects were directed not to write their names on their questionnaires in order to protect their privacy and to allow them to respond freely. Most of the students were cooperative and responsive.

After answering the questionnaire, the Photographic Costume Identity Test was given to each subject individually by the researcher, who, after talking with the subject to reassure the importance of being realistic and factual in her responses, showed the subject the photographs of contumes, one item at at time. Starting with item (1) the researcher told the subject that these photographs were of girls, age 8-10 who were wearing clothes suitable for playing. The subject was told to choose the one dress in the picture that she found most suitable for her sister or daughter to wear for the occasion. After the subject chose the picture she considered most appropriate, the researcher asked her why she chose it. The subject's choices and responses were recorded immediately by the researcher, on a paper attached to the questionnaire. The same method was used for items two through ten.

In item (11) the researcher showed the subject a picture of a young man wearing soccer gear, with shorts several inches above the knees and said to the subject ,: "This is a picture of a soccer player. Do you think the style and color are suitable for the Saudi Arabian International Soccer Team? What is your suggestion? Some say that the shirt should be white and the shorts green, while others want green shirts and white shorts. What do you suggest?" The responses of the subject were written down immediately by the researcher.

In Item (12) the researcher asked the subject to draw a young woman walking in a shopping area and to write a comment about the drawing.

Later the researcher scored the answer sheets. Scoring of the Identity Conformity Test and the Photographs of Costume Indentity Test was done by giving four points to the answer which indicated a definite conformity with Islamic value identity, two points were given to a moderate conformity and a zero to nonconformity answers. Some students elected to write comments in the space provided at the end of each question. These comments were then scored according to the level of conformity. After each student's scores were totalled, the following scale was used to determine the student's level of conformity:

score of 0 through 18 = weak conformity
score of 19 through 36 = moderate conformity
score of 37 through 48 = high conformity.

Results

Demographic and Social Characteristics

Some of the relevant background information on the social and demographic characteristics of the 129 respondents is as follows:

Age: over 98 per cent of the respondents were in the age range of 17 to 24, of which about half were 17 to 20 years old and the other half were 21 to 24 years old. Only 1.6 per cent were aged 25 years or older.

Place of birth: a majority of the respondents, 77.6 per cent, were born in Saudi Arabia. The remaining 22.4 per cent, though most of them Saudi by nationality were born outside Saudi Arabia.

Nationality: the sample was primarily Saudi by nationality as indicated by 91.5 per cent. Only 7.7 per cent were from other Arab countries, primarily from the Gulf Co-operation Council countries, and only one respondent (.8 per cent) came from a non-Arab country.

Schooling: though over 87 per cent had their schooling in Saudi Arabia at elementary, preparatory, and high school levels, those who completed their high school in Saudi Arabia were 93 per cent, those who completed preparatory school 92.2 percent and elementary school 87.6 per cent. The remaining 11.6,7, and 6.2 per cent for elementary, preperatory, and high school levels respectively had their schooling in other Arab countries. Only less than one percent had their schooling in a foreign, non-Arab country at each of the three levels.

Identity Conformity Test

The result of the Identity Conformity Test (ICT) indicated that the majority of the students (89 out of 129 or 68.99%), showed a moderate level of conformity to Islamic cultural identity. The high level conformers numbered 35 (27.13%) and there were 5(3.88%) low level conformers (see Table 1). The differences between the three groups were very significant $x2_{(2)}=84.28 p < 0.001$. The finding supports Hypothesis 1, which stated that there are more university women students with moderate level of conformity to Islamic cultural identity that related to general appearance and some social habits than those with high or low conformity levels. The finding did not support the second hypothesis which stated that the high level conformers are significantly fewer than the low level conformers. On the contrary the high level conformers are significantly more than the low level conformers.

Table 1

Students' levels of conformity to Islamic values as shown by their responses to ICT and PCIT.

Level	High		Moderate		Low		Total
Test	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
ICT	35	27.13	89	68.99	05	03.88	129
PCIT	08	06.20	68	52.71	53	41.09	129

Photographic Costume Identity Test

The result of Photographic Costume Identity Test (PCIT) indicated that the majority of the students 68(52.71%) showed a moderate level of conformity to Islamic cultural identity (see Table 1). The high level conformers numbered only 8(6.20%) and there were 53(41.09%) low level conformers. The differences between the three groups were very significant $x2_{(2)}=45.35$ $p < 0.001$. The findings support the first and the second hypotheses. Correlation between the results of ICT and PCIT was very significant for sample size of 129(r=0.53).

Differences in Levels of Comformity between Dormitory and non-Dormitory Students

For ICT the result indicated that the majority of university dormitories' students and the students who did not live in dormitories showed a moderate level of conformity to Islamic cultrural identity [44(64.71%) and 45(73.77%) respectively]. For the low level of conformity, the first group had only 1(1.47%) and the second group had 4(6.56%) low level conformers. In the group with high level of conformity there were 23(33.82%) living in dormitories and 12(19.67%) living off campus. (Table 2). However the diference between the two groups of the students in the low and high levels was not statistically significant x2=2.05. This result did not support Hypothesis 3 which stated that the majority of university women students with a high level of conformity with Islamic cultural identity are those who live in the dormitories.

Table 2

Dormitories and non-dormitories students' levels of conformity to Islamic values as shown by their responses to ICT and PCIT

Test	Levels	High		Moderate		Low		Total
	Students	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
ICT	Dormitory Students	23	33.82	44	64.71	1	1.47	68
	Non-Dormitory Students	12	19.67	45	73.77	4	6.56	61
PCIT	Dormitory Students	5	7.35	42	61.76	21	30.88	68
	Non Dormitory Students	3	4.92	26	42.62	32	52.46	61

Table 3
Students levels of conformity by their feeling about their conformity level.

Students' feeling about their conformity	Levels of Conformity								Total	
	Low Level				Moderate Level					
	ICT		PCIT		ICT		PCIT			
	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*
No answer	1	0.78 20.00 20.00	3	2.33 60.00 5.66	4	3.10 80.00 4.49	2	1.55 40.00 2.94	0	0.00 0.00 0.00	0	0.00 0.00 0.00	5	3.88
Satisfied	4	3.10 3.85 80.00	43	33.33 41.35 81.13	68	52.71 65.38 76.40	53	41.09 50.96 77.94	32	24.81 30.77 91.43	8	6.20 7.69 100.00	104	80.62
Some what Satisfied	0	0.00 0.00 0.00	6	4.64 33.33 11.32	15	11.63 83.33 16.85	12	9.30 66.67 17.65	3	2.33 16.	0	0.00 0.00 0.00	18	13.95
Unsatisfied	0	0.00 0.00 0.00	1	0.78 50.00 1.89	2	1.55 100.00 2.25	1	0.78 50.00 1.47	0	0.00 0.00 0.00	0	0.00 0.00 0.00	2	1.55
Total	5	3.88	53	41.09	89	68.99	68	52.71	35	27.13	8	6.20	129	100.00

* Frequency percent
Row percent
Colum percent

For PCIT, the result showed that the majority of university dormitories' students showed a moderate level of conformity 42(61.76%), while the majority 32(52.46%) of the students who did not live in university dormitories showed a low level of conformity. Second in order for the first group was the low level where the number was 21(30.88%), and for the second group was the moderate level where the number was 26(42.62%). The third in order for both groups was the high level, where the first group had 5(7.35%) and the second group had 3(4.92%) high level conformers (Table 2). The differences between the two groups in low and high levels were not significant x2=3.00. This result also did not support Hypothesis 3.

Students' Feeling About Their Level of Conformity

The data from the question concerning students' feeling about their appearance in general when cross analysed by the results of ICT and PCIT showed that the low level conformers are comfortable with their low level of conformity (80.0% and 81.13% respectively) (Table 3). While those unsatisfied with their low level of conformity for the two tests were either 0(0.00%) for ICT or 1(1.89%) for PCIT. The difference between the satisfied and unsatisfied students of this level of conformity were significant for both tests at 0.05 level of significance with 1 degree of freedom x2 for ICT was 4 and for PCIT was 25.92. These results did not support Hypothesis 4 which stated that the majority of university women students with a low level of conformity do not feel confortable about such identity.

Factors Related to Students' Conformity Levels

Analysis of variance was performed on variables of different factors by the results of ICT and PCIT to find the difference between students' levels of conformity to some Islamic cultural identities related to these factors. The results were as follow:

1- Mothers' Conformity: The data evaluating mothers' levels of conformity indicated the following significant differences:-

(a) The result of the question concerning mothers' commitment to Islamic dress and womens' appearance by the result of ICT showed a significant difference at the 0.05 level between the students of

high level of conformity, and both low and moderate ones. That is, the high conformers have fewer non-conforming mothers than those of the moderate and the low level conformers and vice versa, $F(2,125)=10.14$ $p=.0001$. Similar results were obtained from PCIT but the difference was not significant, $F(2,125)=1.68$, $p=.1903$.

(b) The result of the question that concerns mothers' preferance of clothing compared with the result of PCIT show significant differences at the 0.05 level between the three groups in general. That is, the high level conformers' mothers prefer Islamic clothing more than mothers of low and moderate level conformers, $F(2,124)=3.45$, $p=.0346$. The result of ICT though not significant, showed similar trend. $F(2.124)=2.76$, $p=.0673$. (Table 4). These results support part (a) of Hypothesis 5.

2- Peer Groups: The result of the question concerning friends' preferance of clothing by the result of ICT showed significant differances at the 0.05 level between both high and moderate conformers, and low level conformers. That is, the high and moderate level conformers' friends prefer Islamic clothing more than the friends of low level conformers, $F(2.122)=5.4426$, $p=.0054$. However in the PCIT the difference was not significant although the result was similar, $F(2.87$, $p=.0607$ (Table 4). This result supports part (b) of Hypothesis 5.

3- Foreign Influences:

(a) Fashionshops: The result of the question concerning the frequency of visits to the fashionshops by the result of ICT showed significant differencs at the 0.05 level between the high level conformers and both groups of students of moderate and low level conformers, high level conformers being more than the moderate and the low level conformers in negative care about visit to the fashionshops. $F(2.126)=9.1216$, $p=.0002$. When compared with the result of PCIT it also showed a significant difference at the 0.05 level between the same groups, $F(2,126)=8.4604$. (Table 4).

Table 4.
Analysis of variance on students' levels of conformity in ICT and PCIT cross analysed by mothers conformity , friends conformity; and foreign influence variables .

Variable	Test	High Level N.	High Level M.	High Level SD.	Moderate Level N.	Moderate Level M.	Moderate Level SD.	Low Level N.	Low Level M.	Low Level SD.	F Ratio	Significance
Mother conformity	ICT	35	1.06	.23	88	1.50	.64	5	2.00	1.00	10.14	.0001 *
	PCIT	8	1.12	.35	68	1.35	.59	52	1.50	.67	1.68	.1903
Mother preferance of clothing.	ICT	35	2.60	.50	87	2.38	.53	5	2.20	.45	2.76	.0673
	PCIT	8	2.75	.46	67	2.49	.53	52	2.31	.51	3.46	.0346 *
Friends preferance of clothing.	ICT	33	2.09	.29	87	1.96	.32	5	1.60	.55	5.44	.0054 *
	PCIT	8	2.12	.35	64	2.03	.31	53	1.90	.35	2.87	.0607
Fashionshops visit	ICT	35	2.37	.55	89	1.92	.59	5	1.60	.55	9.12	.0002 *
	PCIT	8	2.75	.71	68	2.07	.58	53	1.87	.56	8.46	.0004 *
Following Fasion magazine	ICT	35	1.86	.36	89	1.61	.49	5	1.40	.55	4.58	.0120 *
	PCIT	8	2.00	0.0	68	1.76	.43	53	1.49	.50	7.88	.0006 *
Traveling Abroad.	ICT	35	1.57	.50	89	1.30	.46	5	1.20	.45	4.38	.0145 *
	PCIT	8	1.62	.52	68	1.44	.50	53	1.24	.43	3.74	.0265 *
Religiosity	ICT	34	1.18	.39	89	1.43	.56	5	1.40	.55	2.86	.0610
	PCIT	8	1.00	0.0	68	1.32	.50	52	1.46	.58	3.07	.0497 *

* significant differences
N = unmber M= mean SD= standard deviation.

(b) Fashion magazines: The result of the question concerning students' following of fashion magazines compared with the result of PCIT showed significant differences at 0.05 level between the high level conformers, and both groups of low and moderate level conformers. The high level conformers were more than the other two groups in not following of fashion magazines. $F(2,126)=7.8775$, $p=.0006$. Similar pattern was observed with the result of ICT; there were significant differences between the high level conformers and the moderate level conformers, $F(2,126)=4.5856$, $p=.0120$. (Table 4).

(c) Travel Abroad: The result of the question on whether the student traveled abroad by the result of ICT showed a significant difference between the high level conformers and the moderate level conformers. The high level conformers were more than the moderate level conformers in reporting that they do not travel abroad, $F(2,126)=4.3798$, $p=.0145$.

The result of PCIT showed a general difference between the three groups conserning the same variable, $F(2,126)=3.7389$, $p=.0265$. These results support part (c) of Hypothesis 5 (Table 4).

4- Religiosity:

The results of students' religiosity cross analysed by both ICT and PCIT did not indicate significant differences at the 0.05 level between the three levels of students' conformity and the level of their religiosity. For ICT, $F(2,125)=2.8605$, $p=.0610$ and for PCIT, $F(2,125)=3.0752$, $p=.0497$. These results do not support part (d) of Hypothesis 5 (Table 4).

Discussion

The findings from the two tests as applied to the sample in this study indicate that the majority of students belong to the moderate level of conformity to Islamic values as reflected in their preference for clothing, social customs and selected social habits. These findings suggest that the students have not fully internalized the Islamic cultural identity.

Islam as a religion revealed by God, requires absolute obedience to His commands, and to the Muslims this must remain an unquestionable fact. Therefore achieving high level of conformity to Islamic values is both required and expected in Muslim society.

The moderate level of conformity indicates that the process of students' indentification was influenced by some external factors which played a role in diminishing the degree of acceptance of the cultural identity. Caliezi (1978) referred to identification process as one that expresses man's desire to be similar or alike and which provides him with a feeling of reassurance. But to be similar or alike randomly and in deviation from Islamic cultural identity is what faithful Muslims should avoid inorder to achieve a feeling of reassurance and healthy identity.

Table 2 showes that the majority of high level conformers were those who lived in dormitories, while the majority of low level conformers lived off campus (PCIT). The table also shows that the high level conformers were more among those who lived in dormitories than among those who lived off campus, while in the low level of conformity it was vice versa (CIT and PCIT). Although the difference between these two groups was not significant, the direction of the difference supports Hypothesis 3 which stipulated high conformity among dormitory students stemming from the religious programs that the residents of university dormitories are exposed to. If such programs were better organized and had reached more dormitory students the result might have been significant.

Table 3 indicated that the majority among all of the three conformity levels were satisfied by their identity. For high level conformers such satisfaction is an expression of healthy identity. It does not contain contradictory elements or other unhealthy symptoms. While for low or moderate level conformers (whose identity with their cultural values is not as close as it is supposed to be), their feeling of satisfaction may be the result of a contradiction, a partial or even a complete departure from recognized cultural identity toward other forms of identity.

The result of the study indicates that there is a positive relationship between students' conformity level and their mothers' and their friends' levels of conformity. Psychological resemblance to the father was proven by Harris and Howard (1984) who suggested that such resemblance is a

reflection of close ties to the parent. Such resemblance could also happen as a result of unconscious absorption of an available role model that is around all the time like a family member or a school-mate whether or not there is close or respectful relashionship between them. Exposure to foreign influences is another factor that the study reveals as an important determinant of students' identity. The study of Jahoda, Thomson, and Bhatt (1972) suggested that Asian immigrant school children had departed from the values of their culture as a result of the influence of the values of the host community. Such identity may be wanted, but in the case of unwanted identity suitable measures to protect the individual from such unwanted identity are necessary.

For degree of religiosity factor it was found that the students of the three conformity levels were almost the same regarding their adherence to the religious obligations. Thus low level conformers considered themselves religious persons as did the high level conformers, even though they did not practice religion very closely. This may indicate the presence of a gap between faith and practice that may have resulted in "faith without work" (Smith, Wheeler and Diener, 1975, p.320). This may also be an act of psychological self-deception when no conflict is percieved or acknowledged or again it may simply be a matter of ignorence of religious issues.

Obviously traits of self contradiction, shallowness, and deception within the personality are unhealthy and need to be eliminated.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study found that the majority of the students had a moderate level of conformity to some Islamic values.

The moderate level of identity suggests that there is non-acceptance or rejection of some elements of cultural values by the students who are perhaps being attracted to some elements of foreign, non-Islamic identity. This refers to ambiguous, not healthy identity. Thus it is recommended that young people should be educated through special programs in the process of identification and taught the importance of clear healthy identity that is in harmony with God's commands. This will enable them to achieve consistency between faith and conduct. Similar programs of education are recommended for school children starting from the elementary stage of learning.

The study also found that the low level conformers feel comfortable about their identity. This reflects either a contradiction between their acknowledged religious affiliation and expressed preference for identity, or a shallow knowledge of cultural and religious values. Therefore special educational and cultural program should emphasise students' awareness of negative aspects of personality traits stemming from conflicting identity. These programms should encourage them towards adoption of an identity that is in compliance with their cultural values.

Finally, the study, found a positive relationship between students' conformity level and mothers' and friends' level of conformity. The religious factor surprisingly did not have such a positive effect. However, exposure to foreign influences does appear to contribute to low levels of conformity. So special educational program should consider these results which also suggest the need for similar programs of education for all family members.

Recommendations for further research: (1) conformity may be measured through cultural values other than women's appearance, (2) investigation of the degree of separation between faith and conduct and recognition of the determining factors, (3) study of similar problem of conformity among young men, and (4) application of other psychological scaling tests to measure level of conformity and evalutaion of the process of identification.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the levels of conformity to some Islamic values, and to draw attention to the importance of clear healthy identity. The study also investigated some important factors that related to students' level of conformity. The subjects were 129 women undergraduate students attending a medical school.

The main hypotheses were: (1) There are significantly more students with moderate level of conformity to Islamic cultural identity than those with high or low conformity levels, (2) the majority of the students with a low level of conformity do not feel confortable about their identity, (3) there are significant differences between the three levels of conformity regarding some factors such as mothers' and friends' conformity, foreign influences, and religiosity.

A questionnaire including two tests prepared by the researcher was administered to the subjects. The results of the 2 tests confirmed the first hypothesis and with foreign influences factor in the third hypothesis, while they did not confirm the second hypothesis and the religiosity factor in the third hypothesis. The result of one test confirmed mothers' and friends' factors in Hypothesis 3. Discussion of the results suggested the need for special educational programs to develop clear healthy identity that is in harmony with God's commands.

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